

# The Seven Human Principles – The Deity in Man - Part 2

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## The Third Principle - *Linga-Śarîra*

The third principle, the Astral Body or Linga Sharira, is an ethereal duplicate of the physical body, its original design. It guides Jîva in its work on the physical particles, and causes it to build up the shape which these assume. Vitalized itself by the higher principles, its unity is only preserved by the union of the whole group. At death it is disembodied for a brief period, and, under some abnormal conditions, may even be temporarily visible to the external sight of still living persons. Under such conditions it is taken of course for the ghost of the departed person. Spectral apparitions may sometimes be occasioned in other ways, but the third principle, when that results in a visible phenomenon, is a mere aggregation of molecules in a peculiar state, having no life or consciousness of any kind whatever. It is no more a Being, than any cloud wreath in the sky which happens to settle into the semblance of some animal form. Broadly speaking, the Linga Sharira never leaves the body except at death, nor migrates far from the body even in that case. When seen at all, and this can but rarely occur, it can only be seen near where the physical body still lies. In some very peculiar cases of spiritualistic mediumship, it may for a short time exude from the physical body and be visible near it, but the medium in such cases stands the while in considerable danger of his life. Disturb unwillingly the conditions under which the Linga Sharira was set free, and its return might be impeded. The second principle would then soon cease to animate the physical body as a unity, and death would ensue. (EB)

## The "Astral" Body

During the last year or two, while hints and scraps of occult science have been finding their way out into the world, the expression, "Astral Body", has been applied to a certain semblance of the human form, fully inhabited by its higher principles, which can migrate to any distance from the physical body — projected consciously and with exact intention by a living adept, or unintentionally, by the accidental application of certain mental forces to his loosened principles, by any person at the moment of death. (EB)

For ordinary purposes there is no practical inconvenience in using the expression "Astral Body" for the appearance so projected — indeed, any more strictly accurate expression, as will be seen directly, would be cumbersome, and we must go on using the phrase in both meanings. No confusion need arise; but, strictly speaking, the Linga Sharira, or third principle, is the astral body, and that cannot be sent about as the vehicle of the higher principles. (EB)

The three lower principles, it will be seen, are altogether of the earth, perishable in their nature as a single entity, though indestructible as regards their molecules, and absolutely done with by man at his death. (EB)

Linga Sharira (Sans.) "Astral body," i. e., the aerial symbol of the body. This term designates the doppelganger, or the "astral body" of man or animal. It is the eidolon of the Greeks, the vital and prototypal body, the reflection of the man of flesh. It is born before man and dies or fades out with the disappearance of the last atom of the body. (KEY, Glossary)

## The Sponge Analogies

The Linga-Śarîra, or ethereal (Etheric) double of the Body, is molecular in constitution, but of molecules invisible to the physical eyes. It is therefore not homogeneous.

The Linga-Sharîra . . . is the vehicle of Prâna, and supports life in the Body. It is the reservoir or sponge of life, gathering it up from all the natural kingdoms around, and it is the intermediary between the kingdoms of Prânic and physical life. Life cannot pass immediately and directly from the subjective to the objective, for nature passes gradually from sphere to sphere, overleaping none. The Linga-Sharîra serves as the intermediary between Prâna and Sthûla-Sharîra, drawing life from the ocean of Jîva<sup>1</sup>, and pumping it in the physical Body as Prâna. For life is, in reality, Divinity, Parabrahman, the Universal Deity. But in order that it may manifest on the physical plane it must be assimilated to the matter of that plane; this cannot be done directly, as the purely physical is too gross, and thus it needs a vehicle--the Linga-Sharîra. (Blavatsky, H.P. Collected Writings XII, p704)

## Prana is not necessarily one of the Seven Principles

Although the student can no longer look on Prâna as one of the Seven Principles, since it is the Universal Life, he must not forget that it vivifies all, as Prânic energy. Every Principle is a differentiation of Jîva, and the life-motion in each is Prâna, "the Breath of Life."

Jîva becomes Prâna only when the child is born. Thus Kâma<sup>2</sup> depends on Prâna, without which there would be no Kâma. Prâna wakes the Kâmic germs to life, and it makes all desires vital and living.

Prâna is not, it must be remembered, the production of the countless "lives" that make up the human Body, nor of the congeries (collections) of the cells and atoms of the Body. It is the parent of the "lives," not their product. As an example, a sponge may be immersed in an ocean; the water in the sponge's interior may be compared to Prâna; the water outside is Jîva. Prâna is the motor-principle in life. The Body leaves Prâna, Prâna does not leave it. Take out the sponge from the water, and it becomes dry--thus symbolizing death. (Blavatsky, H.P. Collected Writings XII, p707, Kâma and Kâma-Rupa)

[http://www.katinkahesselink.net/blavatsky/articles/v12/y1890\\_059.htm](http://www.katinkahesselink.net/blavatsky/articles/v12/y1890_059.htm)

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<sup>1</sup> Jîva – Life, from the Sanskrit verbal root *Jiv* meaning 'to live', its literal significance is *life* especially in relation to the ONE LIFE. It is used as a synonym of the Absolute and Unknowably Deity. Although Prâna and Jîva are often used synonymously, since both words convey the significance of "life" or the "principle of life", Jîva stands for the One Life – that which is all pervasive during a period of activity whereas Prâna is not "absolute life" but its aspect in a world of delusion. Thus Prâna is equivalent to the life-principle in man during his lifetime on earth and likewise a life principle of the earth itself. Often times Jîva is used as an equivalent for Monad (Atman and Buddhi conjoined); although more correctly when used in this manner, the term should be Jîvâtman. (DP, p.88, The Functions of Jîva)

<sup>2</sup> Kâma – Desire, from the Sanskrit verbal root *kam* meaning 'to desire'; the fourth substance-principle of which the human constitution is composed: its desire principle or the driving, impelling force. Kâma *per se* is a colorless force, good or bad according to the way the mind and soul use it. When a person follows his lower impulses and centers his consciousness in the body and astral nature, he is directing that force downwards (directed toward selfish ends). When he aspires and opens his heart and mind to the influence of his higher manas and Buddhi, he is directing that force upwards (desire to help others or to advance knowledge) and thus progressing in evolution.

## Division of the Seven Principles of Prâna between Linga-Śarîra and Kâma-rûpa

For Prâna (or life) has, strictly speaking, two vehicles, as Manas is double: (The third principle,) Linga-Śarîra, or astral body, is the vehicle of the life principle, or spirit life; while (The fourth principle,) Kâma-rûpa is the vehicle of the physical or material essence.

In other words, the three higher principles of the septenary of Prâna reside in the astral body, while the four lower principles have their seat in Kâma-rûpa. You have learnt something new tonight, because I discovered, to my great surprise, that Mr. Bert Keightley did not know what I meant, that Kâma-rûpa was the vehicle of the life essence and that there was a difference between it and Prâna, which has seven principles. Therefore, as Kâma-rûpa is the vehicle of the grossest of that form, that Prâna the astral body has got, is a vehicle of the spirit of the life principle, because it is connected with the higher principles of the triad and not with the quaternary. (SDC, Chapter 16 Meeting April 25 1889)

### The Fourth Principle - *Kâma Rûpa*

The fourth principle is the first of those which belong to man's higher nature. The Sanskrit designation, Kâma Rûpa, is often translated "Body of Desire", which seems rather a clumsy and inaccurate form of words. A closer translation, having regard to meanings rather than words, would, perhaps, be "Vehicle of Will", but the name already adopted above, Animal Soul, may be more accurately suggestive still. (EB)

### The Fifth Principle used to be called the Animal Soul

In The Theosophist for October, 1881, when the first hints about the septenary constitution of man were given out, the fifth principle was called the animal soul, as contra-distinguished from the sixth or "spiritual soul"; but though this nomenclature sufficed to mark the required distinction, it degraded the fifth principle, which is essentially the human principle. Though humanity is animal in its nature as compared with spirit, it is elevated above the correctly defined animal creation in every other aspect. By introducing a new name for the fifth principle, we are enabled to throw back the designation "animal soul" to its proper place. This arrangement need not interfere, meanwhile, with an appreciation of the way in which. . .

### The Seat of Animal Desires

. . . The fourth principle is the seat of that will or desire to which the Sanskrit name refers. And, withal, the Kâma Rûpa is the animal soul, the highest developed principle of the brute creation, susceptible of evolution into something far higher by its union with the growing fifth principle in man, but still the animal soul which man is by no means yet without, the seat of all animal desires, and a potent force in the human body as well, pressing upwards, so to speak, as well as downwards, and capable of influencing the fifth, for practical purposes, as well as of being influenced by the fifth for its own control and improvement. (EB)

The seat of animal desires and passions. This is the centre of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal man from the immortal entity. (KEY)

Note: Sinnett does not use the word "emotional" in the sense of emotional body in his description of the constitution of man.

## On the Fate of the Lower "Principles"

THEOSOPHIST. When the man dies, his lower three principles leave him forever; *i. e.*, body, life, and the vehicle of the latter, the astral body or the double of the *living* man. And then, his four principles — the central or middle principle, the animal soul or *Kama-rupa*, with what it has assimilated from the lower Manas, and the higher triad find themselves in *Kama-loka*. The latter is an astral locality, the *limbus* of scholastic theology, the *Hades* of the ancients, and, strictly speaking, a *locality* only in a relative sense. It has neither a definite area nor boundary, but exists *within* subjective space; *i. e.*, is beyond our sensuous perceptions. Still it exists, and it is there that the astral *eidolons*<sup>3</sup> of all the beings that have lived, animals included, await their *second death*. For the animals it comes with the disintegration and the entire fading out of their *astral* particles to the last. For the human *eidolon* it begins when the Âtma-Buddhi-Manasic triad is said to "separate" itself from its lower principles, or the reflection of the ex-personality, by falling into the Devachanic state.

Then the *Kama-rupic* phantom, remaining bereft of its informing thinking principle, the higher *Manas*, and the lower aspect of the latter, the animal intelligence, no longer receiving light from the higher mind, and no longer having a physical brain to work through, collapses.

ENQUIRER. In what way?

THEOSOPHIST. Well, it falls into the state of the frog when certain portions of its brain are taken out by the vivisector. It can think no more, even on the lowest animal plane. Henceforth it is no longer even the lower Manas, since this "lower" is nothing without the "higher."

ENQUIRER. And is it this nonentity which we find materializing in Seance rooms with Mediums?

THEOSOPHIST. It is this nonentity. A true nonentity, however, only as to reasoning or cogitating powers, still an Entity, however astral and fluidic, as shown in certain cases when, having been magnetically and unconsciously drawn toward a medium, it is revived for a time and lives in him by proxy, so to speak. This "spook," or the *Kama-rupa*, may be compared with the jelly-fish, which has an ethereal gelatinous appearance so long as it is in its own element, or water (the medium's specific AURA), but which, no sooner is it thrown out of it, than it dissolves in the hand or on the sand, especially in sunlight. In the medium's Aura, it lives a kind of vicarious life and reasons and speaks either through the medium's brain or those of other persons present. But this would lead us too far, and upon other people's grounds, whereon I have no desire to trespass.

(KEY, Section 9, *On the Fate of the Lower "Principles"*)

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<sup>3</sup> Eidolon (Greek; plural eidola) A word meaning "image" of the man that was. After death there remains in the astral world — which is on the other side of the threshold of physical life, the etheric world — the "shadow" of the man that was. The ancients called these human shadows, shades; modern children and nursemaids call them ghosts and spooks; and each such shade is but an eidolon, or astral image or pale copy of the physical man that was. This eidolon coheres for a while in the astral realms or in the superphysical ether, and its particles are magnetically held more or less coherent as long as the physical corpse is not fully dissolved into its component elements; but these eidola in a comparatively short time fade out, for they decay in a manner closely resembling the disintegration of the physical body. (OG, Purucker)

## References

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